

Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE
January 25, 2024 7:30 pm
Meeting Minutes

A. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Scot Mazur, Mark Weiner, and Lou Garapolo
ABSENT: None
STAFF: Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner

B. AGENDA

Motion by Weiner to approve the agenda. Second by Mazur. Motion approved 3-0.

AYE: Mazur, Weiner, and Garapolo
NAY: None

C. MINUTES

Motion by Mazur to approve the minutes. Second by Garapolo. Motion approved 2-0 with Weiner abstaining as he was not a member of the ARC in 2023.

AYE: Mazur and Garapolo
NAY: None
Abstain: Weiner

D. 321 Home Ave (Jacqueline Bassett): Discuss project to demolish one existing garage and build an ADU addition to second existing garage (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Chair Garapolo introduced the project. Planner Trexler provided an overview.

Chris Wollmuth, the architect, was present for the project. Mr. Wollmuth said the existing garage may have been a shed. It is very small. The alley is higher than the garage, and the garage is in terrible shape. He said the structural engineer provided a letter.

Committee member Weiner said they could connect the two garages. Mr. Wollmuth said the garage is not usable due to the condition of the slab. They'd have to prop up the building to pour a new slab, and that would only begin to address the issues. He said this is a heavily renovated and high-density setting. Chair Garapolo asked for photos and Mr.

Wollmuth directed the Committee to a few photos of the garage in the packet. He said there's a mix of garages in the alley.

Committee member Weiner recommended that they tear down the other garage and add onto the historic one. Mr. Wollmuth said the non-historic garage is the only usable one.

Committee member Mazur said the structural engineer's report is good, but cost comparisons would be helpful. For example, what Committee member Weiner's suggestion would cost vs. this proposal.

Chair Garapolo asked about the roof shape proposed. Mr. Wollmuth explained the use of the gable over the addition to go with the house.

Chair Garapolo asked about the materials proposed and Mr. Wollmuth said he believes the house is wood. They need to re-clad the garage. They hope to use cement board due to longevity. Chair Garapolo recommended wood product to match the house. He said it's important to have some statement of cost so the HPC can understand. He said the focus is to restore rather than remove.

Mr. Wollmuth asked which walls would need to be retained on the historic garage and Planner Trexler recommended keeping the east wall as this is what is visible from the street.

Chair Garapolo said the structural engineer's letter focuses on the shed addition, which can be removed, so he's not sure that's what the engineer intended. It was confusing. Committee member Weiner agreed and said the second-to-last sentence says to take down the lean-to.

Committee member Weiner recommended matching the overhang from the house on the ADU. He recommended matching windows to the house.

- E. 150 N Cuyler Ave (Phillip Cunningham):** Discuss project to build side/rear addition on house and addition to non-historic garage (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Chair Garapolo introduced the project. Planner Trexler provided an overview.

Chris Wollmuth, the architect, was present for the project. He said the new window on the front elevation would mimic the other windows on the house. It is meant to provide more light. In comparable photos, many had the full height window. The new rear porch is deeper to make it a more usable space.

Committee member Weiner said the Guidelines regarding front elevation windows are unclear. Mr. Wollmuth said they would replace windows throughout. Chair Weiner said that's ok, but he has a problem with removing the small front window. Mr. Wollmuth said it will let more light in and will allow visibility to the street. He said they're not concealing or closing a window, they're expanding. Chair Garapolo noted on page 4, the Guidelines say property owners "shall not remove." He urged against making it a double-hung window.

Committee member Weiner suggested the new window could have matching trim, but the Commission would likely not approve altering the window. Mr. Wollmuth said they will not alter the window.

Chair Garapolo said he has no concerns with the addition. He noted that it will be stucco and will match the front porch. He asked if the garage is wood and Mr. Wollmuth confirmed. Chair Garapolo asked why not stucco and Mr. Wollmuth said it is significantly more expensive. Committee member Weiner recommended getting cost estimates. He said he just did a stucco garage project and he didn't think the stucco was that much more. He said historic houses are not cheap. Chair Garapolo said it's a sizable building and stucco would be great.

The Committee discussed the porch columns. Mr. Wollmuth confirmed they will be painted, wrapped wood. He said they will leave off the dentil detail on the addition to differentiate from the historic front porch.

Chair Garapolo recommended locating the exterior AC units where not visible from the street. Mr. Wollmuth said it may be possible to put them behind the porch.

- F. **412 N Grove Ave (Kaufman):** Discuss project to build a side addition near the rear of the house, demolish garage, and build new garage (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Garapolo introduced the project. Planner Trexler provided an overview.

Chris Wollmuth, the architect, was present for the project. He said the base of the addition is stone to match the house foundation and they will carry the stone up the chimney. The owners want the addition at grade for privacy. However, it is taller as it needs to connect to the house.

Chair Garapolo said the addition looks like the lake house with the stone chimney. Typically chimneys in Oak Park are brick. He said his other concern is the windows. The existing enclosed porch windows are a nice proportion to duplicate, but the clerestory windows throw it off. He said he's struggling to see the relationship between the addition and the

house. He confirmed with Mr. Wollmuth that they are screens and said maybe that will make it work. Mr. Wollmuth said the upper windows take on the upper portion of the adjacent double-hung sash windows. The materiality of the addition will make it read as newer.

Chair Garapolo said an overall view would be helpful. Mr. Wollmuth said it would be a great expense because he hasn't modeled the front of the house.

Chair Garapolo recommended using brick on the chimney. The Committee discussed the details and agreed wood siding with brick chimney could be appropriate.

Chair Garapolo asked if they are demolishing the garage and Mr. Wollmuth confirmed. Chair Garapolo said they will need to provide the same information as the first project. The objective is to restore historic elements. Mr. Wollmuth said he doesn't know its condition. He asked what type of review would be required for a garage addition. Planner Trexler said if it's not visible from the street, it can be reviewed by staff.

G. Other Business: None

H. Adjourn

Motion by Mazur to adjourn. Second by Weiner. Motion approved 3-0.

AYE: Mazur, Weiner, and Garapolo

NAY: None

Meeting adjourned at 8:40PM.

Minutes prepared by Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner.